OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ACADEMY OF COMIC-BOOK FANS & COLLECTORS

THE COMIC READER # 24

April, 1964

LIMITED EDITION PUBLISHED FOR THE ACADEMY

ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE BOARD

There appears to be close agreement among board members on the type of plan that would serve best for the election of Executive Board members. There is strong support for each of the following points:

(1) A board of about 50 members representing all segments of circulation, including the sign countries.

(2) 2-year, rather than 1-year terms, as called for in the Charter and By-Laws.

(3) 25 Board Members to be elected every year.

(4) Ballot to include the names of all Supporting Members in good standing.

(5) Each Supporting Member to vote for up to 25, including blanks, for the Board.

(6) The 25 candidates with the largest number of votes to be elected, the Secretary-Treasurer to break ties for last place.

(7) This year only: Elect 50 with top 25 to receive 2-year terms, and next 25 to receive only 1-year terms.

(8) A Board Member may succeed himself.

(9) A Board Member loses his seat automatically if he fails to remain eligible under the Charter and By-Laws.

(10) The Incumbent Secretary may appoint 5 additional Supporting Members to the Board, each year, during the term of office. Purpose of this option: To insure representation on the Board of chairmen of active committees, interested persons unknown but active fans, and persons of prestige and stature who might be passed over in a popular election. Limiting appointments to five should eliminate any chance of "packing".

(11) All vacancies on the Board to be left open until the next annual election, at which time they would be filled in such a way as to make 25 seats open for re-election the following year.

(12) Election to be held in August each year (perhaps as early as July) in order to give the new Board time to elect its own officers to conduct the Alley Awards Poll.

Please use the enclosed ballot to vote "yea" or "nay" to each one of these 12 provisions--even though you may have already expressed yourself on these matters. Consider this a formal vote for Amendment to the Charter.

THE FUTURE OF THE COMIC READER ???

Those Board Members who have thus far commented on the question of TCR seem quite emphatic: "THE COMIC READER should be published as a separate, monthly newsletter, carrying both pro-news and Academy news, and be available to all comics fans," and many add wishfully "for an s.a.e." This also appears to be what comic fandom as a whole would like, for it gave TCR the highest rating in the 1963 Alley Awards Poll. This result both surprised and delighted me. I was surprised because I honestly didn't think fans would give such a high score to a ditto'd newsletter that in six issues managed to carry only one illo. I was delighted, of course, because it can only mean that TCR was doing the job it was intended to do. Since it was not the kind of zine that evoked much reader comment, I was never sure while I was publishing it that all the hours spent after midnight were well-spent. Now I'd like very much to be able to resume regular publication of TCR and do an even better job, but it just isn't feasible. I have already over-extended myself in publishing these limited editions. The burden of publishing TCR for all of fandom will now have to fall on someone else. The problem is: Who? Few are able to take it on, and many fail to comprehend fully the commitment. TCR is not the kind of zine that can be handled as a second love. It will demand all the time one can give it, and then some. Furthermore, it can not be operated on a shoestring. (Excuse me for mixing my metaphors.) Costs on TCR were running me anywhere from $30.00 to $60.00 per issue, and I wasn't paying postage except on the 200-to-300 complimentary copies I sent out each month. Academy funds at present are no where near sufficient to support TCR in the same style. Although some fans feel that offering TCR for an s.a.e. is an essential part of its function, I'm afraid that paid subscriptions are the only way that TCR can be adequately financed. Even so, the publisher will still have to plan for several hundred complimentary copies of each issue, for it is only through this gesture that one can establish and maintain contacts with new fans and with pros, who are a sporadic but irreplaceable source of news. Furthermore, in order to serve its function properly, TCR must be mailed first class. Third class mail is altogether too slow for a monthly newsletter. But first class mail adds from 60¢ to $1.20 to the cost of a yearly subscription. Postage on foreign subs runs considerably higher. All these things have a way of adding up. I don't believe TCR could operate in the black (and still be effective) for less than 25¢ per copy. That's $3.00 per year. I've always been reluctant to put such a tag on TCR; I was afraid it would defeat its purpose. However, suppose every new fan entering Comicdom were allowed one free copy, and could get subsequent issues for 25¢ each. Do you think that TCR under this policy could continue to serve as an invitation to new fans? I'd be interested in your reaction.

The fundamental problem remains: Who will edit and publish TCR? In the meantime, all faneds are encouraged to reprint items from these limited editions of TCR as COMIC READER BULLETINS.

ON THE DRAWING BOARD / ON THE 4-COLOR PRESSES / ON THE STANDS

The long awaited origin of the Blackhawks is revealed at last in the July BLACKHAWK #198. The story, entitled "D-Day for the Blackhawks", is a spectacular full-lengther that takes us back with the team to World War II. George Kashdan, new Blackhawk editor, reports the first test of the Blackhawk Combat Diary was an instant success. More are forthcoming. (That's what I like about DC; it took years to get reader response to Hawkman, but with Blackhawk, they know the results almost before the mag hits the stands.)

Comic fan and assistant editor at National, E. Nelson Bridwell, reports proof-reading recently "Crisis on Earth III," which serves as the vehicle for another but all too brief appearance of the JSA. This story appears in the August JLA #29. We are introduced to a "new" group of heroes on Earth III, with names like Johnny Quick, Ultra-man, Super-Woman, Power Ring,&Owlman. Hawkman, Dr. Fate, Dr. Mid-nite, Starman, & Black Canary represent the JSA.

Some of the upcoming "combos" in BRAVE AND BOLD are Robin-Aqualad-Kid Flash, Atom-Metal Men, Flash-Manhunter, Batman-Green Lantern. All will be written by Bob Haney. It is interesting to compare these combos with those chosen by fans on the Alley Poll.

For humor fans, there's a new, re-vitalized "Adventures of Jerry Lewis" on the way. With Murry Boltinoff taking over the editing and writing chores, the July-August ish will feature a spoof of horror films. Ditto for BOB HOPE and DOBIE GILLIS.

Next BATMAN ANNUAL (#7), still edited by Jack Schiff, features the whole Batman Family, including four origin stories to answer many questions about Batman chartacters. Better get this issue as a kind of memorial to Alfred, because he is being written out of the Batman strip. He will be replaced by a "Thelma Ritter"-type housekeeper. Many more changes, all in an effort to restore Batman to past glory, will be forthcoming. Julie Schwartz guarantees to provoke more controversy with the June DETECTIVE than any Batman story ever published.

Science-fiction fans have two treats in store for them (says editor Jack Schiff) in the August MYSTERY IN SPACE #93. One starts with Space Ranger in "Captives of the Space Giant." The other features Adam Strange in "The Convict Twins from Space." In the September MYSTERY IN SPACE #94 both heroes team up in an adventure that spans time and space--and guest stars the future Adam Strange. (All this gives you an indication of the dire situation in which we now find Rann's most beloved hero. Do I hear someone screaming for a "Let's Save Adam Strange" campaign?)

Bruce Gordon literally has to fight against his evil self, Eclipso, in the July-August HOUSE OF SECRETS #67, where the fantastic villain assumes a separate identity in "Challenge of the Split Man." In this same issue, Mark Merlin meets his old enemy and "Doctor-7's Supernatural Ally."

ON THE DRAWING BOARD / ON THE 4-COLOR PRESSES / ON THE STANDS

This summer we'll see two annuals from Marvel. The first is the SPIDERMAN ANNUAL with a 41-page story featuring the Sinister Six: Doctor Octopus, Electro, Vulture, Sandman, Mysterio, and Kravin the Hunter. (You know, I have a hunch these fellows won't get along any better than the Marvel heroes.) The other annual will be titled MARVEL TALES ANNUAL rather than STRANGE TALES Annual #3. It will carry those promised pics of the Marvel staff, and the origins of a number of the Marvel heroes. (I hope they reprint that early Henry Pym story before he donned the Antman costume. I'll be darned if I'll pay the price Rogofsky has been asking.)

Word from the McGeehans has Ron Haydock going into the Armed Services. (I'm sure he didn't enlist.) It looks like Paul Blaisdell will assume the editor's chair at FANMO, although I don't have a confirmation of this.

The good word is: We hear that Otto Binder (rhymes with "finder" like on automobiles) is back writing Superman scripts.

In the July ACTION we'll see how Supe would have fared had he grown up on other worlds. His careers parallel those of the Atom, Aquaman, Green Arrow, Batman, and the Flash (the last named is cover-featured). All 5 heroes guest-star. (Looks like Weisinger's group is in the race to see who can crowd more heroes into one story. --Or is Mort the undisputed champion after recent issues of ADVENTURE?) The Sept. WORLD'S FINEST has Superman & Robin fighting Brainiac, while Batman & Jimmy do battle against Clayface. In part I of this serialized story, Jimmy learns Batman's identity. (Aw shucks, we'll just have to wait until the next issue to see how Jimmy manages to forget this juicy piece of gossup.) A story idea that started with our friend Nelson, proceded to Mort who gave it a couple of twists, and ended up with Edmond Hamilton to be polished, has Supe losing his powers and picking a successor--who betrays him! Superman borrows GL's power ring to enlarge his Kandorian successor. (Now Nelson and the boys are going to have to dream up another reason for the fact that we still find Kandor in the bottle.) Jerry Siegel tries his hand at a Legion of Super-Heroes story in the Aug. ADVENTURE. This one has Proty II, of the Legion of Super-Pets, conducting a contest to select the next leader of the Legion of Super-Heroes. The August LOIS LANE features a 3-parter in which Superman marries, then loses, one-by-one, Lois, Lana, and Lori. (Looks like the Code approves serial monogamy but only if you are a Superman. I'm sure curious to see the "fade-outs" in that third chapter.)

It's more of the same for the new (?) Manhunter in the July HOUSE OF MYSTERY #144, but the next issue gives him a try at a two-part adventure. (Gawd, I hope it turns out to be something more than <u>two</u> "evil menaces from the infamous Idol-Head of Diabolu.")

According to Julie Schwartz, fans have picked the Mirror Master as their "favorite" villain. (According to the Alley Poll, he lost out to both Vandal Savage & Capt. Cold.) Anyway, look for an early return of the Mirror Master in FLASH.

NEW BUSINESS -- THE CREATION OF NEW OFFICES IN THE ACADEMY

I would like to suggest that the Board consider creating several offices to replace the single office of Executive Secretary. Believe me, this post is too much for any one person; many of the functions of the Executive Secretary could be handled by different people. Here is a list of offices the Academy seems to need, although some of these might be best combined.

Presiding Officer
Publisher of Board Newsletter
Director of the Alley Poll
Publishing Editor of TCR
Treasurer
Membership Secretary

Personally, I am interested in just one of these posts for the future--that of Membership Secretary, whose functions, as I see them, would be to:

(1) Provide a more or less permanent address for the Academy.
(2) Process membership applications.
(3) Conduct the election of the Executive Board.
(4) Publish the WHO'S WHO, and keep it up to date.
(5) Send literature on the Academy to new fans, pros, and interested parties.

May I have some discussion on this subject?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chicago fans are planning a showing of the Capt. Marvel movie serial. All fans are invited. For details, send an s.a.e. to Alex Almaraz, 4528 South Paulina St., Chicago, Ill. 60609.

Don & Maggie Thompson, 29 College Pl., Oberlin, Ohio 44074 are planning 3 bookets on "How to publish an amateur magazine," covering all processes, techniques, and guides to all phases. Ideas and contributions are welcomed. I understand that proceeds will go to help bring the '66 science-fiction convention to Cleveland. Both projects are surely deserving of support!

The Secretary's Report of the 1963 Alley Awards Poll is now available from the Secretary for 10¢; however, Supporting Members will receive a free copy with their membership packets, which are being mailed now.

By summer, the Microfilm Lending Library of Comic Art should be operational. Fans at the Tally Party saw the first reel of black and white film, but since then I've gotten my color films back, and they are really a delight to behold. (The final image on my reader is slightly larger than the original page.) Color doesn't work out best for interiors for a variety of technical reasons, but covers come out brilliantly; consequently, most work will be in black and white, but each 25-foot reel will also carry a strip showing the covers in full color. Please check with your local libraries to see whether they have 16-mm microfilm readers available for public use. (16-mm movie projectors won't work, because microfilm is not perforated.) Let me know what you find out.

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"Comic Books as Children's Literature"

(A complete bibliography would be mentally and physically impossible to compile; therefore, this bibliography of books used in the article which need further investigation or which were used importantly in the preparation of my paper.)

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The above bibliography pertaining to comics and censorship is reproduced here in the hope that many of you will find it helpful in your collecting and research on comics. It is also hoped that you will be able to assist the Secretary in his search for copies of these works which can be photographed for the Microfilm Library of Comic Art. The loan of any of these works would be greatly appreciated. J.G.Bails.